

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed January 29, 2003, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of the application, claims 7 and 27 have been canceled, and claims 1, 5, 10, 13, 14, 21 and 25 have been amended. The application as presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

Applicants note that claims 23 and 24 have been indicated as allowable.

Claims 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,424,903 (Schreiber). As discussed below, independent claim 25 as amended is patentable over the prior art.

Claim 25 is directed to an intelligent power strip. The intelligent power strip includes a housing, a first group of power outlets defined on the housing, a second group of power outlets defined on the housing, and a means for controlling power to the first and second groups of power outlets in accordance with a predetermined sequence and a predetermined delay to sequentially power-on the second group of power outlets. The intelligent power strip further includes a means for sensing current on the input power line and a means for determining if the sensed current is below a normal-threshold value, wherein if the sensed current is below the normal-threshold value, the power strip enables a means for indicating a normal operation of the power strip.

Schreiber discloses a power switching system for use in powering up the components of a personal computer or other electronic device. The user of the switching system uses a remote control to program the sequence in which power will be provided to particular components and the delay between powering on the components. The processor stores the sequence and time delays according to which power is provided and actuates the relays in the same order. When the power switching system is powered down, the relays are actuated in the reverse order.

Schreiber does not disclose or suggest an intelligent power strip including a means for sensing current on the input power line and a means for determining if the sensed current is below a normal-threshold value, wherein if the sensed current is below the normal-threshold value, the power strip enables a means for indicating a normal operation of the power strip, as is recited in claim 25.

Based on the foregoing, claim 25 is patentable over Schreiber and the rejection of claim 25 should be withdrawn. Claims 26 and 28-32 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 25, and are patentable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 25.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,424,903 (Schreiber). As discussed below, independent claim 1 as amended is patentable over the prior art.

Claim 1 is directed to a power strip. The power strip includes a housing having a first end and a second end, a plurality of power outlets mounted on an exterior surface of the housing, and a power management circuit defined on an interior region of the housing. The power management circuit includes a current sensor circuit that is adapted to receive input power over an input power line, the current sensor circuit being coupled to a power supply and to the power outlets. The power management circuit also includes a micro-controller coupled to the power supply and to a relay driver, the relay driver receiving control signals from the micro-controller, and an under voltage sensor coupled to the micro-controller and adapted to receive a predetermined voltage-value from the power supply and being responsive to the predetermined voltage-value falling below a predetermined threshold value by providing a reset signal to the micro-controller. Also included is a plurality of relays coupled to the relay driver and to the power outlets. The relays receive a control signal from the relay driver to actuate the relays to a conductive state to powering-on the power outlets and the relays receive another control signal from the relay driver to actuate the relays to a non-conductive state to powering-off the power outlets.

Similar to the argument discussed above with respect to claim 25, Schreiber does not disclose or suggest an under voltage sensor coupled to a micro-controller and adapted to receive a predetermined voltage-value from a power supply and being responsive to the predetermined voltage-value falling below a predetermined threshold value by providing a reset signal to the micro-controller, as is recited in claim 1.

Based on the foregoing, claim 1 is patentable over Schreiber and the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn. Claims 2-12, being directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 1, are patentable over Schreiber for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schreiber in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,674,031 (Siska). As discussed below, independent claim 13 as amended is patentable over the prior art.

Claim 13 is directed to a power distribution method. The method includes the steps of energizing an input power line to power-up a first group of power outlets on a power distribution system and initializing the power distribution system. Initializing includes the steps of programming a normal-threshold value into the power distribution system, programming an overload-threshold value into the power distribution system, and programming an under-voltage threshold value into the power distribution system. The method further includes controlling a plurality of relays to actuate to a conductive state in accordance with a predetermined sequence and a predetermined delay to sequentially power-on a second group of power outlets on the power distribution system.

Siska discloses a computer power controller to supply power to electronic devices in a first sequence and to remove power from the same devices in a second sequence upon shutting down the devices. A number of relays are coupled to a number of AC female receptacles in the power controller.

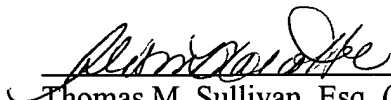
Neither Siska nor Schreiber, which was discussed above with respect to claim 25, either alone or in combination, discloses or suggests programming a normal-threshold value into a power distribution system, programming an overload-threshold value into a power distribution system, and programming an under-voltage threshold value into a power distribution system, as is disclosed in claim 13.

Based on the foregoing, claim 13 is patentable over Schreiber in view of Siska, and the rejection of claim 13 should be withdrawn. Claims 14-22, being directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 13, are patentable over Schreiber in view of Siska for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 13.

Applicant(s): John McNamara et al.
U.S.S.N.: 09/688,298

Based on the foregoing, this application is believed to be in allowable condition, and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the examiner has any questions regarding the application, he is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,


Thomas M. Sullivan, Esq. (Reg. No. 39,392)
Alison Marcotte, Esq. (Reg. No. 51,998)
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris,
Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.
One Financial Center
Boston, Massachusetts 02111
Telephone: (617) 542-6000
Attorneys for Applicants

Date: May 7, 2003

TRA 1766286v1